RESTORATION REVIEW

The New Humanity: Introduction . . .

"BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW"

The purpose of religion might be described as an effort to reconcile fallen man to God, or, as the term *religion* suggests, to bind man back to God. A famous catechism indicates that the function of religion is to cause man "to love God and enjoy Him forever." In the series of studies upon which we now embark we are suggesting that religion may be viewed as an experience in *newness.* Religion is a love story between man and a God whose intention is to make all things new. We intend to show that *the new humanity* is in reference to God's eternal purpose, a purpose that figures into all that God has done in human history.

The significance of such a study may be indicated by a reference to some of "the new things" promised to believers in the scriptures.

What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and the new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home (2 Pet. 3:13)

See, the days are coming—it is the Lord who speaks—when I will establish a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah. (Heb. 8:8)

I will give them a new heart and I will put a new spirit in them. (Ez. 11:18)

You will be called by a new name. (Isa. 62:2)

I give you a new commandment: love one another. (John 13:34)

For anyone who is in Christ there is a new creation; the old creation is gone, and now the new one is here. (2 Cor. 5:17)

When we were baptized we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life. (Rom. 6:4)

Now we are rid of the Law, freed by death from our imprisonment, free to serve in the new spiritual way and not the old way of a written law. (Rom. 7:6)

Such references help us to understand God's declaration "Behold, I make all things new." Our youth these days are speaking of "doing their *thing.*" Isaiah speaks of God's purpose in similar language: "Behold, I will do a new thing."

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All this suggests that there is a distinct character to *newness.* Just what does it mean to be a part of the new humanity? What is the character of the new man in Christ? Our Lord came to save us, to make us whole, to lead us into the abundant life. What is the nature of this new life? In Eph. 2:15 Paul sees the purpose of Christ as "to create one single New Man" of those who are divided by hostility. What does this mean? And how does all this

relate to *the last things:* the new Jerusalem, new heavens and new earth, a new body, and even a new song? We plan to give attention to such questions.

Those words "Behold, I make all things new" were spoken by God, seated upon His throne, the first words He speaks directly in *Revelation.* It seems to have reference to the saints' eventual reward in a new universe, being related as it is to the new Jerusalem, the tree of life, and the paradise of God. But it is also saying that God is One who is continually renewing and recreating. Just as it is His nature to be the alpha and omega, referred to in the same passage, it is His nature to be making all things new—those things, that is, related to the saints' edification for now and forever.

It is hopeful that this study will help us to better understand what it means to be in fellowship with God. It must be impressed upon us that fellowship is a relationship between *fellows* and God. It is only because God is with us that we can be brothers together. In the same passage where God talks about making everything new, it speaks of His fellowship with men.

I heard a great voice from heaven. "Behold," it said, "the dwelling-place of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them." (Rev. 21:3)

God Himself shall be with them! This is the fellowship of God, and this is the basis for the new humanity. Men are changed and made new only as God dwells with them. To be born a second time is, therefore, to enter into fellowship with God through His Son. When this occurs one becomes a new creation, and surely all that makes up his personality is new: his desires, thoughts, emotions, habits. Once fellowship with God is a reality and this *newness of life* is his, he is consequently in the fellowship with all others who have been born anew through Christ. Fellowship, then, is not by our manipulation, but by God's creation.

Once we see God's community on earth (His dwelling place) as the new humanity, we will then see what we call "the church" in terms of *people,* a certain kind of people, rather than in institutional terms. It is probable that we have something beside born-again people in mind when we speak of being "loyal to the church." It is often more doctrinal than personal, more institutional than familial. To see the church in terms of the new humanity should help us to appreciate the character and implications of *newness of life* in Christ. And in turn we should also better see the church as the family of God.—*the Editor*

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BLACK AND WHITE TOGETHER

In her stimulating *My Life With Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Coretta Scott King tells of the day her husband received news that he had won the Nobel Peace Prize for 1964. He was in the hospital for a checkup, and a number of important citizens in Atlanta came to his room to offer their congratulations. Among the visitors was Archbishop Hallinan of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta, who asked Dr. King if he might give him his blessing. With Dr. King's permission he proceeded to offer a traditional blessing, followed by the sign of the cross. Then to Dr. King's surprise the archbishop knelt beside his bed and asked, "May I receive your blessing?"

Touching episodes like that are happening more and more these days as the Spirit of God continues His work upon our sectarian hearts. Dr. King remarked afterwards to his wife that it was beautiful to see a Roman Catholic archbishop kneeling before a Baptist preacher named Martin Luther! It must have been equally beautiful to see a white man bowing before a black man. To say the least, it was a dramatic moment of black and white together.

Mrs. King also tells how, when their party traveled in Europe on their way to Oslo to receive the Nobel award, white people would join them on the stage or in hotel lobbies as they sang that line in *We Shall Over come* that goes "Black and white together, Black and white together, we shall overcome someday."

The song, which is the battle cry of the civil rights movement, has a melody that penetrates the soul and touches the heart. If it were possible, I would have you hear the Bishop College choir sing it as you read this article. In that event the music would surely effect you more than my words will. I recall the first time I made a point of listening carefully to the song that is now well-known throughout the world.

It was a black Baptist congregation in Dallas and the occasion was a city-wide memorial service for Martin Luther King, held just three days after his death. Rabbis, priests, ministers from all over Dallas were there, black and white. The mayor of Dallas gave a short eulogy, with tears in his eyes. A black preacher who had held revivals at the King church in Atlanta through the years and who knew the King family intimately was the main speaker. He was most effective, and what he said was more factual than it was emotional. He predicted that King would accomplish even more in his death than he did in life for the unity of mankind. He made reference to the many unfair accusations that had been made against his young friend, one of them being the charge that he was a Communist. "M. L. was no Communist. He was just trying, like Jesus, to help the down and out." And by the way he said it, one had to suppose that he knew what he was talking about.

Several of the leading gentlemen of the cloth spoke. The Jewish rabbi was especially impressed, identifying King with that long line of noble men who have given their lives for depressed humanity. The Roman Catholic bishop could not be present, but his representative extolled King as one who now belonged to the ages, like Lincoln.

Insofar as I could tell Ouida and I and our Phoebe were the only ones of our folk that were there. All segments of the Restoration Movement were almost completely out of touch with King's civil rights efforts, including our own black brethren. Since he was not "Church of Christ," even our Negro folk were reluctant to recognize what he was doing for them. One of our black brothers tells of the night he heard of King's assassination. A meeting was going on and he whispered the news from Memphis to those in charge. After some discussion they decided that perhaps an announcement should be made, and at the close of the service it was. The brother telling me about it felt that much more should have been made of such a tragic night in the history of the black man.

The Disciples of Christ invited Dr. King to address their International Convention a few years back when it was held in Dallas. The Dallas Disciples protested King being on the program, insisting that the national committee withdraw the invitation, the pretext being that the city authorities did no want to risk the possibility of assassination. The committee told the Dallas folk that if the invitation to King was to be withdrawn they would have to withdraw it. It was not withdrawn and King came. But it was a bitterly divided convention that year, and not just over restructure!

On at least one occasion our own black Marshall Keeble publicly recognized the contribution of King. To an all-black congregation he said: "Martin Luther King has done a lot for us. If it weren't for him, we'd still be riding in the back of buses. If it weren't for him, we couldn't stop at motels and eat in restaurants." But when his audiences were integrated he would say: "If it weren't for the white folks, we'd still be running around naked. They've given us our buildings, they've educated us. White folks have been mighty good to us."

So it was unlikely that the Restoration Movement would have ever produced a Martin Luther King. Neither is "We Shall Overcome" exactly our kind of music. Both King and the song were a little too much where the action is.

But back to the city-wide memorial service for King. It was dignified, appropriate, and emotionally-restrained. Then came that song. It seemed to emerge spontaneously. It was at the end and we were all standing. I do not recall ever being so touched by a song. There stood the clergy from several denominations, along with city officials, and hundreds of blacks and whites. A handsome brown man from Bishop College mounted the rostrum and began to sing, and soon he was joined by what sounded like an angelic multitude. *We shall overcome . . . s-o-m-e-d-a-y.* It was transporting. *Deep in my h-e-a-r-t I do believe, we shall overcome someday.* It was a tremendous tribute to a fallen leader. I watched Mayor

Jonsson, of Texas Instruments fame, a great and good man, and one who is justly proud of presiding over a city free of race riots. He was standing alongside the old black brother that had told us of his friendship with young King. They were both singing. *Black and White t-o-g-e-t-h-e-r . . .*

I looked down at our little Phoebe. She was singing, as was her Mother. In front of us stood the president of Dallas Junior College System and behind us stood a man we then barely knew, President Curry of Bishop College. We were all singing. *We shall all be f-r-i-e-n-d-.s . . . We shall overcome someday.*

Black and white together! The sentiment is not only appropriate to such a song, but it is consistent with our profession of the religion of Jesus Christ. While it must be granted that we have largely inherited from our forebearers the ugly racial strife that now curses our nation, it must also be admitted that the white Christians of this generation have done far too little to heal the wounds. Our Lord came to make men one, so that they might enjoy the abundant life together. His mission was to break down the walls that divide men. Paul assures us that "Christ is the peace between us, and has made the two into one and broken down the barrier which used to keep them apart, actually destroying in his own person the hostility."

The peace of Christ is antithetic to hostility, whether that hostility is between Jew and Greek, male and female, bond and free, or between colorations of the skin. If Christ dwells in us indeed, then we will be used as peacemakers for God, demolitionists who are set upon breaking down the walls of malice and prejudice.

So it is not enough for us to assert that we ourselves have built no walls, that we have nothing against any race. It is our problem whether we lay claim to it or not. Just as Jesus confronted the evils that he did not create, so must we seek to correct the injustices of our forbearers. And while we are at it, it is Just as well that we admit that we have kept in good repair the walls built by our fathers. We are not without sin.

I have given some thought as to some specific steps any of us might take to undo the wrongs that have so long been evident. Jesus teaches us that love is not mere sentiment or feeling, but *action* in behalf of others. For black and white to be together in Christ there must be a sharing of the common life. Love is *concerned* activity. Fellowship is an action word, being descriptive of a relationship where men help each other to grow. The things we suggest here are simple and everyday, but realistic starting points in waging peace.

1. *Look for ways to bring young blacks and whites together.*

Encourage the white youth in your congregation to visit with those in a black congregation across town. Arrange for bull sessions so that they can share ideas together. Make it possible for Negroes to attend what is now all-white camps. As acquaintances are made arrange for your son or daughter to visit in the home of his or her new black friend.

This is better than having the Negro to your home. Your child needs to see how the Negro lives.

2. *Arrange for white churches to hear black preachers.*

This is extremely important if whites hear the Negroes in their own building. We have had enough of Negro evangelists entertaining white Christians under a big tent, or the occasional Negro on some college lectureship. Let the black man come to Gary Freeman's "Fourth and Izzard church in Dallas" and occupy the pulpit a few times. Let him share with several of the classes, visit in the homes, and truly share in the common life of the congregation. And let the church pay him the same (or more) as it would a white evangelist.

3. *Do something at the personal level for our black brothers.*

We can all pray for our Negro friends in Christ, and we can ask for the wisdom to do more—and we must be *wise* in what we do. *A white* family might start by cultivating the friendship of a black family, with emphasis on the word *cultivate.* Gardens do not grow in a day; nor do real friendships. First contact can be made by a quiet visit to a black congregation. Mix and mingle. Learn a few names and faces. Return after a few weeks, and make it a point to get better acquainted with the same ones. Then can come a phone call to that person's home. "We have a little gift for the children, and since we will be in the neighborhood tonight, we thought we might drop it by," you can say. Drop by, but be casual and be brief. And don't bother to try to talk about racial strife or prejudice. Talk about Jesus. If you can't talk about Jesus, try the Cowboys! But don't talk about how much you admired Martin Luther King, even if you did.

Once you have made friends with a Negro family you have opened up a new world of opportunity, for through them you can contact still others. After awhile you can invite them to your home, but it might be better to invite two or more couples rather than just one. Remember that it is even a stranger world to them than to you.

Or contact can be made by visiting Negroes in the hospital, or the aged in rest homes, or a teacher can arrange for you to get involved through some school project. Once you move into a your integrated world you will find you have more to pray about, more real social concerns, and more meaningful ways to invest your money.

4. *Start your own freedom movement.*

Not many of us have the courage of the man who was in line for a room at a fashionable hotel that always managed to be full when a Negro applied. A black man just ahead of him was turned away. But once the Negro was on his way out the clerk proceeded to register him. "Wait a minute, sir," he shouted to the departing Negro. "The clerk must have made a mistake. He has a room after all!" That man had his own civil rights movement.

There are little things we can all do, loving things that mean much in this transition period from insanity to sanity. That employer that dared to obey the law and hire a Negro may need moral support. Go out of your way to commend the black waitress he has serving you, and don't forget that the poor thing is trying harder since she's number two, or three, or four. And if your school board has stuck its neck out by putting a black teacher in a white school, then stick *your* neck out by writing cordial letters both to the board and the teacher.

In short, stand up for Jesus by standing up for the Negro. Do your best to act so the unkind in town will call you "a nigger lover." Then you can pray better than ever.

"Thank you, Father, for making me a little more like Jesus. They're saying that I'm 'a nigger lover' and that's what Jesus was. He so loved 'niggers' that He died for them on a cruel cross'—and for the wops, the greasers, the slant-eyed, and for sinners like me."—*the Editor*

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IN DEFENSE OF DEBATES

Our efforts these days to encourage more love feasts within our divided ranks has for some reason evoked negative attitudes toward debates. Many of us have been saying that we have had enough debates, and that now we need to meet together in ways that foster goodwill and brotherly kindness. This can hardly be gainsaid, for there has been enough fratricidal bloodshed to last us a long time. Yet I keep hearing things said about debates that cause me some uneasiness. In a recent unity meeting it was suggested that the debates are now over and that it is a good riddance. All of us who are advocating a richer expression of unity are supposed to view debates as the antithesis of the spirit of unity meetings.

I assume that in rejecting debates as a way of ameliorating divisive wounds between God's children that the critic has in mind the partisan spirit that has usually characterized such confrontations. Our various factions have divided into warring camps and opened fire on each as if it were a mission of seek and destroy. And for generations about the only contact our people had with "the sects" was in the context of a debate, which attracted people something like a public hanging did, and for similar reasons. We have had our professional debaters, and whenever we were out for the kill, these surgeons were called in to do the skinning.

Such debates should not only be tucked away as relics of our inglorious past, but they should never have even begun. Surely this is the *strife* that Paul includes in his catalogue of carnal things, and which is rendered as "debate" in the *King James Version*. It takes

little wisdom to discern that such tomahawking of each other has only fired the flames of discord and further ruptured the body of Christ.

Yet I am persuaded that like most evil this one too is a perversion of the good, for debating can be a helpful device in weeding out impurities in our thinking and clearing out a lot of the cobwebs that cause our hangups about a lot of things. Wherever man is free he has become more responsible and more intelligent through reasonable disputation.

Our problem has been that we have not been sufficiently mature to engage in the kind of debating that stretches and frees the mind. It would be like allowing a neophyte into the circle where Socrates and Thrasymachus are in confrontation, or like giving ear to a cheap politician in a discussion in the House of Commons. Debating has been a game we played at, a form of theatrics with entertainment more the incentive than learning. The audience has been more like spectators at a gladiatorial contest than like auditors at a seminar.

It has not always been so among us, for some of our more illustrious forebears have shown how debates can be both fraternal and dignified. Our polemicists have not always been men who were out to nail someone's hide to the sunny side of the barn. Some of the debates in our history have been models of parliamentary procedure as well as true to the principles of the educative process.

The Campbell-Owen debate is such an example. The arrangements were not made by way of an angry exchange of letters or by the disputants hurling ugly epithets at one another. Rather we find Robert Dale Owen being invited to the Campbell home where he spent several days making the necessary arrangements with Mr. Campbell. He and Campbell walked the hills together and discussed many topics of common interest. They were both *gentlemen.* They had no tomahawks in their belts, nor were they collecting hides for a trophy case back home. Selina Campbell in her *Home Life* tells of how Mr. Owen enjoyed his visit and how he described Bethany as the most beautiful spot on earth. Mrs. Campbell tells how kind and affable Mr. Owen was, but observed that he always avoided the family devotions, being the infidel he was. But after the family worship Mr. Campbell would go to Owen's room to tender further kindnesses before retiring. It was with this disposition toward each other that they went to Cincinnati.

Mrs. Campbell also relates how at the debate there was a woman visiting from Europe who was impressed with how the disputants would walk into the hall together, laughing and chatting, having been out to dinner together. It is a scene in bold contrast to what has usually been the case in our more recent history. *We* are here and *they* are there, and the contestants, like the gladiators in Nero's arena, have no contact with each other except in the charged atmosphere of strife and conflict. Each is out for the kill.

Campbell was not the only one in our history that could be both irenic and controversial. The Harding-Moody debate is a joy to read, for it is an example of how men can differ and still show brotherly love towards each other. To James A. Harding his Baptist

challenger, J. B. Moody, was a *brother,* and he consistently refers to him in that manner in the debate.

Most of my own experiences have been otherwise. The Baptists I have debated were strictly *outsiders* to me, and I would have chewed on garlic before I would have called one of them *brother.* Success was measured by the number of Baptists I could re-immerse.

The one glorious exception was a debate I attended out in the sticks somewhere with Carl Ketcherside. We stayed with the brother that Carl was debating. We ate at his table and slept in his bed, and in the evening we would go to the meeting house and debate. I don't know how one could be sweeter to a man than Carl was to that brother. We would sit around the house during the day discussing the debate, and we actually helped the brother with his arguments for that night, and the Lord knows he needed it, debating with Carl. It was unbelievable!

Debates are not *per se* contrary to that irenic spirit that will heal our wounds. As iron sharpens iron so man sharpens man, says the Bible. It is all right if we choose to call them something else beside debates, for it has become a rather ugly term, but the value of controversy, *brotherly* controversy should not be overlooked. It is all right for us to keep our guts when we meet in forums to discuss our differences. Nor do we need to spend our time bemoaning the ugly debates of the past. Instead let's demonstrate how brothers can stretch each other's minds instead of each other's hide, and challenge each other to examine the *status quo.* After all, provoking one *can* be Christian.

A change in format may give Christian controversy the new look it needs. Instead of pitting two brothers against each other, like two wrestlers circling each other in a ring, let four brothers join in the formal discussion. Dispensing with signed and precise propositions that tend to overstress the differences, let the subject be such as *The Problem of Instrumental Music.* And the four men need not represent only *two* sides!

And let this take place in a context of worship and togetherness, with much prayer and soul-searching. "The Lord's servant must not *strive,"* should always be a point of reference.

We are saying that our current unity movement is not and need not be any effort to "sweep differences under the rug." It is rather an exercise in casting a cloak of brotherliness over all those who are in Christ Jesus. And in this warm and loving atmosphere we can "debate thy cause with thy neighbor" with great profit to all concerned. Unity is God's own gracious work in us through His Spirit. To preserve that unity we may well need to challenge each other where it hurts most—our own pride.—*the Editor*

It is the great tragedy of our time that Marxism, which had been conceived as a movement for the liberation of everyone, has been transformed into a system of enslavement of everyone, even of those who enslave the others.—*Paul Tillich*

It is the business of the very few to be independent; it is a privilege of the strong. And whoever attempts it, even with the best right, but without being *obliged* to do so, proves that he is probably not only strong, but also daring beyond measure.—*Nietzsche*

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THE GHETTO CHURCH OF CHRIST

CLOYD ANTHONY

Every man is, in some respects, like other man, like some other men, like no other man
—Clyde Kluckholm

In the above quotation the late anthropologist of Harvard University expressed a truth which, if understood by people everywhere, might reduce the antagonisms which fragment our world. I elect to paraphrase Kluckhohn's statement as a basis for discussing some cultural factors which account for religious differences. Thus, "Every professed Christian is, in some respects, like *every* other professed Christian; like *some* other professed Christians; like *no other* professed Christian."

In my judgment, in matters of vital importance, the similarities among professed Christians, regardless of their stated, denominational or non-denominational affiliation, so overshadow their differences that proselyting and bickering about who will be "saved" become childish, anti-Christian activities. Of course, the problem is to agree on the irreducible minimum of "vital matters." The anti-instrumental Churches of Christ, alone, are splintered into numerous "anti" and "anti-anti" sects each with a peculiar subculture of "important matters" that are of no consequence to other people or to God.

Gerhardt Siegler, who was purged by Hitler, once told me that Nazism was a system in which "everything that is not required is automatically forbidden." Siegler's statement may be overdrawn but it expresses a general truth that has broad application. That was the condition of Jewish seers when Jesus arrived on the scene, and this state of affairs prevails in many contemporary churches including those Churches of Christ that have fallen prey to authoritarian power structures and personalities.

Another conference at "Jerusalem" similar to the one reported in Acts 15 is needed. If all contemporary "apostles and elders" including key personnel from our colleges, editors of the "sound" papers, and the "great preachers," who are loyal to their respective parties (Paul, Apollos, Peter, or Christ)—if all were to assemble, could they agree on the minimum essentials of the good news about Christ that the entire world so desperately

needs? Could they be as reasonable, as humble, and as brief as were those who attended that first conference? Could they (and the Holy Ghost) agree "to lay upon... (the brotherhood) no greater burden than these necessary things" in belief, practice and doctrine? If so, this would refocus attention on *The Way* that draws all men to Christ. It might reduce the petty legalisms, personal rivalries, and institutionalized pressures which separate brethren. Which church will play "Antioch" and call for a conference? Which "Jerusalem" will attract all factions?

Every professed Christian is, in some respects, like *some* other professed Christians. Religiously speaking, we closely resemble the other members of the local church with which we are affiliated. As a youth I was immersed in icy, running water near the meeting house where the Pikes Peak (Indiana) Church of Christ has worshiped for a century. I accepted the religious subculture of attitudes, values, form of worship, doctrine and Biblical interpretations that prevailed in that Church of Christ. We were "the people," God's preferred ones. We were different from "denominational" church folk: "Digressives," Baptists, New Lights, Methodists, United Brethern, "Holy Rollers" and the few Roman Catholics. We of the "Lord's Church" rated the denominations in terms of how far they were from the "truth" (as we conceived it). The "Digressives" and New Lights stood closest to us; "Holy Rollers" and Catholics at the bottom of the pile. However, aside from our observance of "be ye separate" in worship and organization, I was not aware of much overt hostility among churches. As an ignorant, ethnocentric boy I often wondered why the "Lord's people" could enjoy so much wonderful fellowship with the "lost" in every place except—in a church building.

In all honesty, I must say that the Church of Christ folk whom I knew as a youth were not abrasive, conceited, or extreme in their ethnocentrism as so many are today. None boasted that we were the *only* Christians, nor did they gleefully assign the "denominations" to the underworld. Neither was there the hostile prohibition against fraternizing with other churches that I have observed in recent years. Other "denominations" were in "error," more or less, but not regarded as alien to the universal Church of God. The Book-Roberts debate at the Beck's Grove Church of Christ did rekindle some fire between us and the "Digressives" but not for long. In fact, the kind, Christian demeanor of Dr. Books, debating under irritating circumstances, won the hearts of many of our people even though they still opposed instrumental music in worship.

Fifty years after leaving my native hills, I am thankful that my early life was fashioned among the independent-minded hill folk who refused to become slaves to the institutionalized, standardized, rigid Biblical interpretations which have emerged from the "Bible Colleges," "Schools of Preaching," authoritarian papers and professionalized clergy. I am thankful that I was taught by parents, neighbors, and shepherds (bishops, elders) and occasionally by evangelists, rather than by hirelings who "care not for the sheep." Above

all, I am thankful that the subcultures of my childhood community, though ethnocentric and binding in many ways, nevertheless never closed my heart and mind to an eternal search for truth.

The only excuse for including this bit of personal history is to illustrate the culture-binding influence in the life of any person who is born and reared in a small world circumscribed geographically and/or culturally. At birth, each of us enters a small world not of our own choice or making. Our only exposure is to the pattern of culture and subcultures that exists in the family and other neighborhood groups. Religiously speaking, we accept the faith of our parents. If we live always in isolated groups and sub-cultures, separated from the main stem of human influences, we do not change very much. However, in these times of rapid mobility and mass communication in mass society, exposure to strange ways and alternative choices is inevitable.

For more than 500 years the term “ghetto” referred to isolated, segregated Jewish groups in urban communities in Europe and America. Today, the term refers to many types of racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups that are, in some ways, isolated. I believe that Dietrich Bonhoeffer coined the expression “ghetto church” in referring to those religious groups that emphasize the “sacred” rituals in a meeting house and meticulously avoid “secular” involvement with the “social gospel,” or the vital issues of the times. The geographical location of the church building is not related to the concept “ghetto church.” The building may be a million dollar structure and stand atop “quality hill.” On the other hand some churches located in the slum or in a racial-ethnic ghetto, would not be classified as a “ghetto church.”

Whereas racial segregation is usually imposed upon people, most religious segregation is self-imposed. The group withdraws from the “world” or from the “adulteration” of other religions. Historically, most religious groups manifested some degree of separateness. The Ancient Jews and modern Amish are examples of extreme cultural isolation. The ecumenical movement and other efforts to establish a bridgehead of fellowship among churches has made little headway among the militant churches including most Churches of Christ. Our segregation and “disfellowshipping” each other has resulted in numerous ethnocentric, spiritually deprived religious ghettos on the outer fringe of the great City of God. Of course, we all favor “unity” on one and the same premise: move into our ghetto! Which one? Sometimes I wish other denominations would do just that—simply flood our little world so overwhelmingly that our few “sound” men could not immerse and indoctrinate the new “Christians” with our peculiar subculture fast enough to prevent the inflow of fresh spiritual insights. To me, it is tragic that the segments of believers who call themselves churches of Christ have become so ethnocentric, ghetto-like that we cease to be a vital, effective force in the universal kingdom of Christ.

No matter what name the ghetto church appropriates, it symbolizes the very antithesis of God's purpose in Christ. The subculture of the ghetto church is self-serving, self-perpetuating. Extreme ethnocentrism generates conceit and bigotry among members; intolerance and hostility toward those without. While this attitude "converts" some personality types, it establishes barriers that offend many members and non-members.

The "Organization Men" in the ghetto church strongly support institutionalized rules, roles, and relationships. This maintains power over persons and preserves the appearance of solidarity. While denying any claim of infallibility, they profess absolute and exclusive correctness in interpretation of scriptures, in teaching and preaching. They equate their own voices with the will of God. They attack the popes and clergy of other churches while assuming the same roles, power and exemptions disguised under different nomenclature.

Loyalty and "faithfulness' of members in the ghetto church are reinforced by perpetual indoctrination in petty "commands" about regular attendance at the meeting house, "giving money to the Lord," doing everything "through the church" and under the elders. Statistics of baptisms, attendance, and monetary contributions are the chief criteria of an active church. There is need for some devil to attack: "modernism," "liberalism," "denominationalism;' "evolution;' "communism" and others. Nothing cements in-group loyalty so much as a community of hate for some real or imaginary enemy. (Nothing, that is, except a community of love). Every totalitarian system knows this. While attacking "modernism" as a terrible evil the Organization Men use the most questionable modern promotional schemes to support programs of doubtful value. Weightier matters of command—love, mercy, justice, kindness, and humility are neglected. Personal salvation has been depersonalized, standardized, institutionalized, ritualized, legalized, dispirited and tied exclusively to a collective (herd salvation) organizational establishment.

Jesus came to build a universal spiritual kingdom, a world brotherhood of man. The ghetto church can not contribute significantly to the messianic promise because it can not *see* beyond its own walls. It has no vision of what the Kingdom really is and, since it mistrusts other people, other cultures and religious views, it isolates itself from cross-cultural contacts that might provide a new point of view. Since the ghetto church thinks it "possesses all truth" its primary mission is to peddle its own little bag of cliches.

Jesus understood the binding, blinding influence which the ethnocentric subcultures of ghetto churches have upon personality. All of the Jewish sects were captives of this evil. Jesus came to free the Jews and all mankind from its satanic power. He came to reaffirm and reinterpret the basic laws which God established in the beginning and which will remain to the end of time. The ghetto churches among the Jews tried to circumvent the primary laws of love, mercy, justice, and humility by accumulating hundreds of petty "do" and "don't" commands of their own invention, or erroneous interpretation of scripture. Jesus cut through all of this trivia and told them to "get with it." When John the Baptist

preached, “repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” he meant repentance over violation of God’s law. He was no more concerned than was Jesus with the accumulated bag of traditional garbage which the Pharisees emphasized. And if our ghetto church leaders today would listen, Jesus has a similar message for them. Most of the so-called “commands” that we repeat week after week and year after year originated in the minds of our own men as they mis-read scripture. God is more concerned that every man be “born again,” converted, transformed all the days of his life than he is with the relatively inconsequential “commands” of bodily ritualistic gymnastics to, in, and from a meeting house. He is more concerned that we repent than in hearing us debate nonsense about things we do not understand. If we emphasize love, mercy, justice repentance and humility we will do well.

Mark 9 and Luke 9 record two incidents that are of special significance. First, the ghetto-minded apostles just could not endure anyone who “followeth not us.” And neither can we. Wouldn’t we love to close the lips of “denominational” preachers and our own “false” brethren who do not eagerly embrace our views and leadership—who do not enthusiastically dance while we play the pipes? But read what Jesus said to those apostles —and to us. The culture-bound, ghetto-centered mind can never accept an idea it did not invent.

Just prior to the above mentioned incident, Jesus caught the apostles arguing about who would be *greatest.* Our contemporary “apostles” worry about the same weighty question! Do you know the “great” men in the Church of Christ today? Heard their great sermons? Read their prophetic warnings about heretics and imaginary evils misunderstood? Read what Jesus said to those who *really* would be great. His prescription was from a universal point of view and a “hard” saying, indeed. So, having ears to hear we hear not, neither do we see.

Of all the apostles, Paul best comprehended the relationship between Christianity as a universal religion and the variability of cultures and subcultures. He understood both Greek and Jewish culture. No wonder Jesus hand-picked him for a special mission. If contemporary preachers were as well grounded in behavioral sciences as Paul was, they surely could avoid some of the serious blunders they make in interpersonal relations and in misunderstanding scripture. Why do we exclude anthropology, sociology, and psychology from our “preacher curricula” or, if we offer a veneer in these areas, why do we “doctor” the content to harmonize with our religious creed and doctrine?

Paul accommodated his personal conduce and teaching to the social-cultural conditions as he found them and he did so without compromising moral standards or truth. To Paul, the gospel was a pattern of eternal principles—universal cultural threads—which could be implanted in any culture anywhere and it would leaven the whole. Basically, Paul supposed the cultural norms of the communities he visited. When he condemned the moral

practices of *some* Corinthians and the brazenness of some women, he was warning the church to abide by the norms of the larger society, and he was supporting the status role of women in most societies of that day. He was not establishing new "commands" uniquely Christian about sex morals, "bobbed hair" and women preachers. Failure to support the "best" norms of the larger society would have multiplied the difficulties of planting the good news in unreceptive cultures.

Paul was "all things to all men... that he might save some." (l Cor. 9:19-23) Would that all ghetto churches had the vision Paul had. Even though Paul was a delegate to the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15), was party to the decisions that were made and carried the letter back to Antioch, nevertheless, shortly thereafter he circumcised Timothy at Lystra. (Acts 16). It was the intelligent thing to do to avoid unnecessarily offending Jews and especially Jewish converts to Christ. If a sincere, insightful brother were to behave similarly today he would be excommunicated by one or more of our papal authorities.

In some respects, no two professed Christians are alike. To a casual, superficial observer, all members of a local Church of Christ may appear to "speak the same thing" and hold identical, uniform beliefs, true to the party line which they are fed from the pulpit and reinforced by the party paper and rigid interpretations in Bible study. Even elders and deacons may happily assume perfect "unity" in faith and practice. This illusion can persist indefinitely if members are discouraged or prohibited from thinking or expressing their honest views. However, anyone who knows intimately and well, the members of a church —if every member knows that his honest, dissenting views will be respected and held in confidence—then wide differences of belief, conviction and Biblical interpretation will be found. Such differences will be in areas which the power structure considers "faith by hearing the word" items: water baptism; form of baptism; instrumental music; infallibility of the Bible; evolution; liberalism; and numerous less critical areas especially the statistical indices of "faithfulness."

But I need not belabor a fact that every knowledgeable reader already knows from his own experience and observation. And many who know prefer to play games and remain in good graces with "principalities and powers." If we are to have unity of spirit and love in the "One Body" (defined as inclusively or exclusively as you like) we must make allowances for diversity of cultural background and individual differences (as Jesus and Paul did) in all matters of "opinion" and some of us will have to transpose most items from our "faith by hearing the word" ledger to our "opinion" ledger. Can we bend our stiff-necked, uncircumcised hearts to do it?

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DECEMBER DIARY

NORMAN L PARKS

Ella Rae had gone to public worship, leaving me to nurse a mild case of the flu. The raw December wind spattered raindrops against the window above my desk, where I had accumulated sundry pleas for aid against my annual round-up of contributions—Agape, House of the Carpenter, World Radio, Baker College, my home Negro church, Herald of Truth. I studied the last-named, thinking of how I had left it alone over the years, perhaps among other reasons because its creator had used me as an example of "dangerous liberalism" in his classes, and thinking too, that perhaps I ought to be positive and send the requested $25 anyhow to share in whatever good it was doing.

Actually I had never heard Herald of Truth and had never discussed it with anyone. Why not listen, I thought, before I write the check? The program was well under way when the picture tube flashed on an erect pastoral figure speaking in a well modulated voice. There as an occasional half-smile, as if to emphasize the solemnity of the message. Also the restrained gesture, such as hundreds of speech classes have been taught to use. At the appropriate time the speaker gave the camera a good left profile, and then, appropriately, the right profile, just as speech classes have been rehearsed to do for a generation. One almost expected the film suddenly to cut out and the voice of an instructor say to his class, "Now, students, lets analyze this performance."

But the speaker continued his well rehearsed presentation, looking down confidently from his pulpit and, it seemed to this observer, also talking down to his audience. His theme was the Church as God's means of salvation. The preceding Sunday I had heard Leamon Flatt give a stirring talk on "Churchanity versus Christianity." The TV sermon seemed to be very much in the Churchanity groove. Few Catholics could have done better. As the church emerged in the presentation, it was not an ecclesia, a way, or a fellowship, but rather a *res,* an organization, a ship bound from the earthly to the heavenly porta ship distinct and different from its passengers. A person not aboard would never arrive. Across its prow was the one true name, "Church of Christ." One gets a stateroom by baptism. Get in touch with the nearest Church of Christ. If you do not know of one, write us and we will tell you where the nearest one is (what omniscience!).

The uninitiated were not to be left to their imagination as to what the True Church looked like. The camera gave a fleeting glimpse of a steeple against the sky and then focused on the paneled interior. Front and center on the screen stood the pulpit, the background revealing no rival in organ or choir. Then the view swept the well-filled pews of stylishly dressed, solemn-faced, and all-white members. They did not appear to be doing anything—either praying or meditating or even thinking. The passivity was familiar enough, but the swinging camera appeared to dissolve into brief self-consciousness the customary audience mask worn at sermon time. The environment was circumspect enough

for any middle class Caucasian to fit into with ease. The reaction of a negro or a blue-collar worker or a ghetto dweller would doubtless be something else.

This was, of course, very orthodox Church-of-Christism. Since the church is a *res,* a thing, an entity of and in itself, it has an existence separate from and independent of its members. The sacrificing of an individual "for the sake of the church" is as logical as burning heretics at the stake was to the medieval clergy. In brief, while God adds to the church those who are being saved, the crew of the ship can throw overboard any passenger, just like poor old Jonah, to preserve the "peace" or maintain the "unity' of the Church.

The upper deck and pilothouse of the good ship, it is understood, are reserved for the church elite—the semi-articulate "eldership" and the very articulate "ministry," the latter being composed of the professional (for hire) churchmen, editors of the Establishment press, and college administrators. Here the log is kept, the course chartered, and the decision-making process centered, the ordinary passengers being accorded no vote or voice. The Big Decisions, of course, are made by the ministry, while the day-to-day operations are executed by the eldership, customarily in association with the "minister" and, if the group is rich enough, the "associate minister."

Over the decades and at almost every port of call, the list of hapless passengers tossed overboard from the good ship True Church has grown distressingly long—the anti-pastorites, the premillennialists, the one-cuppers, the instrumental psalloists, the antis, the anti-antis, the wrong songbook users, the anti-college-in-the-budgeteers, the speakers in tongues, the modernists, the dialoguers, the social gospellers, the "softies," and (that cover-all blanket fit for anything disapproved by the ship-running elite) the liberals. Whole groups may be chased overboard on masse. At other times the purity of the ship may be dramatized for the instruction of the silent majority by making a single college teacher walk the plank to trumpets. Never did the Puritans police a better ship.

When the film's credit line flashed on the screen the information that the show had been run by the Highland elders, I returned dispirited to my desk, thinking that Carl Ketcherside was perhaps right when he said that possibly the best thing that could happen would be for all of the church houses to burn down one night. Then we would be forced back upon ourselves as people in face-to-face groups, away from institutionalism, away from impersonalism, away from dogmatism, away from churchanity. I took my pen in hand and quadrupled my check to the House of the Carpenter.

Norman Parks, for sixteen years professor of political science at Middle Tennessee State University, was chosen by faculty and students of that institution as "Distinguished Professor for 1969," an honor supported by a cash award of $1,000.

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READERS' EXCHANGE

World Turned Black

Your recent article on the black students was interesting. I believe all our efforts ought to be aimed at the very young. That is, our educational efforts. The older blacks need to learn that education is a human trifle, like wealth, and of no ultimate importance. In short, they need religion, as we all do. All else is futile. God bless you richly.—*Alabama*

I enjoyed your piece, *A Word Turned Black.* It throws a different light from that which most of us have always held.—*Indiana*

The soul-searching honesty in your article, *A World Turned Black,* is as refreshing as a cooling breeze under the desert sun.... You have likewise demonstrated the hold one's traditional upbringing can have on him... One day, after the tragic murder of Dr. King, a girl in the office wondered why I, "a whitey," ventured to the office in the heart of the riot-torn city. In calm assurance I told her: "I recognize only one race—the human race—and Jesus Christ, my Savior, came into the world to save sinners, not skins."—*Arlington, Virginia*

As you might imagine I read with more than usual interest the account of your experiences at Bishop. How I identified with so much that you said! I too find no simple solutions to our problems. But if I am close enough to you, I would like to make one or two observations on your article. In return I would be glad to have your response to my thinking.

First, your remarks seem to reflect a widely prevalent white attitude relative to the benefits of the Negroes' integration into white society. But I wonder if our benevolent attempts at "integration" hide an implicit assumption that the whites have something *better* to offer blacks? Obviously we generally do have more material wealth and more economic and political power. And it is right that blacks share this nation's economic and political power. But is it not possible that many blacks may care very little for social intercourse with their white tormentors? In other words talk of integration can hide a paternalistic sense of superiority which is offensive to blacks who have fully accepted their blackness.Second, in teaching philosophical problems with special implications for race relations why not bring into the class materials by blacks, particularly contemporary blacks. If Edmund Burke is worthy of a black student's attention, how much more Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael, or Fran Fanon. This is not to say that the theory of social change proposed by these men is correct as opposed to that of Burke, but *whether*

they are correct is precisely the issue with which young blacks students of philosophy need to get confronted... Bob Ross, *Alabama A&M University, whose world is also black.*

The President's Committee on Civil Disorders expressed fear that we are rapidly becoming a nation of *two* cultures, one white and one black. I too fear this, which means I think it undesirable. I want us to be Christian in the way we relate to each other, to be brothers together. Perhaps we can be segregated without being segregationists, which means we will go our own color way by *preference* and not by force. I doubt if this should be the case in a nation that honors the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. At the level of the most intimate social relations, such as marriage and family life, preferences may make a color difference, and this may be proper. Like a charming secretary at Bishop College that I asked about dating white men. She said that she might consider it, but it was obvious that she had no such desires. Too bad for the white fellows! We might be able to afford *two* cultures in this respect, but if the black man is to have all the economic opportunities that the whites now have, there cannot help but be considerable social intercourse—and *sexual* intercourse too for that matter.

If blacks become executives in large corporations, proprietors of businesses in affluent neighborhoods, stock brokers, leading educators, foremen of construction crews, government officials, as well as professional athletes—and this will eventually happen if opportunities are truly equal—then it will be impossible to speak of *two* cultures. We will be an integrated society. Blacks may, for the most part, continue marrying blacks, as do the Jews, and their "inner circle" may be mostly black. This would be altogether proper. But there would not be *black* music, *black* literature, *black* education, or *black* business. There would simply be music, literature, education, and business.

By an integrated society I mean there will be no thought given to a Negro moving into our neighborhood, or to black and whites marrying if they choose to, or to a black man serving in the White House. We are far, farm from this, and I think Christians should be busy cultivating this kind of atmosphere.

As for your second point, I am in favor of using black source material, but we have to admit that there is not much to use. That is my complaint. Let us be busy making great philosophers, men of letters, artists, commercial leaders, and all the rest—both black and white. Every man must have a right to the vision of greatness and equal opportunity to attain it.

On Reading

That the Church of Christ reader can be distinguished by the books and commentaries he reads (and rereads) has long been suspected, and now confirmed by a little six page flier issued by Baker Book House Publications. The leaflet is titled, "Books for Church of Christ Readers", and has evidently been widely circulated both by Baker and by Church of

Christ publishing houses. We all fall into a trap of reading to confirm our own prejudices, and "The Church of Christ Reader" is probably no exception. Some of the doctrinal hang-ups are noticed simply on casual reading of the folder. Evolution (rather anti-evolution) gets top billing with conservative writers interpretation of anti-evolution only to be later exposed to the ever expanding new vistas of biology and related sciences.

The Church of Christ reader also seems to be gravely concerned in an "expose" of cults, isms, and the recent tongues movement, without being seriously concerned in exposes of the sins of Church of Christism. The reader also wants to know what the sects reach, without considering that we may be a sect. There are also the commentaries. Although written by denominations, whom we regularly dechristianize, they are obviously "sound" enough on the fundamentals to become last word on a topic. Also given top billing is the strongly amillenial book *More Than Conquerors*, with the designation as a commentary achieving "the status of a classic among the Churches of Christ."

It's obvious popularity is due to the amillenial interpretation. Strangely enough the circular reached me through a routine mailing from a premill publishing house. One wonders what the Church of Christ reader would think on being exposed to some of our Restoration pioneers that believed in an earthly, literal thousand year reign, and meanwhile were walking "in the old paths". Perhaps Baker Book House is telling us that the average Church of Christ reader can not be trusted to be critical in his reading. At any rate the list clearly reveals how narrow a sect can become.—*Ralph Sinclair, 1197 Holz Ave., Cincinnati 45230*

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BOOK NOTES

Elton Trueblood's newest book, *The New Man for Our Time*, presents a thesis that goes well with our own series on "The New Humanity." The *new* man, he says, is the whole man. He writes about the cultivation of reverence, the life of service, and intellectual integrity. He is uneasy with the activism of our time that seems to have cut away the roots of our culture, and he is suspicious of the pietism that is untrue to its convictions. The new man, who finds wholeness through reverence and integrity, is truly contemporary because he is more than contemporary. The price is 2.95. We will send *you this* volume, plus two other Trueblood books, for 7.00.

Carl Ketcherside's new volume issued under the title *Christian Commandos*, an attractive book with much (*Mission Messenger* for 1969) is that educates the soul. It is 3.00, as are five other volumes in the series that are still available. You can order all six and pay for them 5.00 monthly, with no carrying charges. Let me urge you to order at once, for several of the volumes, once available, are no longer.

So with *Voices of Concern.* Once we had thousands of them, but now only 200 or so. This is the study of Church of Christism, edited by Robert Meyers, that says much to us in terms of how we can become a more responsible people. Only 3.50.

I wish you could hear Leonard Read speak. He is president of the Foundation for Economic Freedom, and he has things to say about freedom that thrills the soul. I prize my autographed copy of his *Let Freedom Reign*, and I delight in such chapters as "The Miracle of a Meal," "Let's All Be Philosophers," and "The Art of Doing Something:' In paperback they are only 2.00.

A preacher was troubled about being expected to stand in the pulpit each Sunday and saying something worth hearing in the twentieth century. This concern led to a book, *The Contemporary Preacher and His Task*, which we can send you for only 2.95.

The paperback edition of *The Fool of God*, Louis Cochran's Story of Alexander Campbell, will soon be out of print, which is most unfortunate. We still have a few copies at 1.95.

For 3.95 we can send you Gary Freeman's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Heaven*, which is about all of us.

Our new book, *Renewal Through Recovery,* which is the 1969 volume of this journal, will soon be available. The price is 3.00, but you need send no money now; but do write and reserve your copy. This provides for permanent use, leaving you free to pass your loose copies along to friends.

Subscription rate is 1.00 per year, but we encourage 2-year subs at 2.00. We have loose back copies at 20 cents each. We'll send you ten for 1.00 if you plan to distribute them.

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